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THE FIRST NEGRO CHURCHES IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The early Negro churches in the District of Columbia were Methodist and Baptist. The rise of numerous churches of these sects in contradistinction to those of other denominations may be easily accounted for by the fact that in the beginning the Negroes were earnestly sought by the Methodists and Baptists because white persons of high social position at first looked with contempt upon these evangelical denominations; but when in the course of time the poor whites who had joined the Methodist church accumulated wealth and some of them became aristocratic slaveholders themselves, they assumed such a haughty attitude toward the Negroes that the increasing race hate made their presence so intolerable that the independent church movement among the Negro Methodists and Baptists was the only remedy for their humiliation. The separation of the Negro Methodists was made possible at a much earlier date in the District of Columbia, when Richard Allen had set the example by his protest against discrimination in the Methodist church, of Philadelphia, which culminated in the establishment of the distinct Negro denomination, and also when the Zionites in New York City, led by James Varick, had separated from the Methodists there for similar reasons. It was not until the time of the critical period of the slavery agitation, however, that practically all of the Protestant churches provided separate pews and separate galleries for Negroes and so rigidly enforced the rules of segregation that there was a general exodus of the Negroes, in cities of the border States, from the Protestant churches.¹ The District of Columbia had the same upheaval.

¹ This dissertation was written from facts obtained from these churches and their pastors and verified by reference to books and newspapers. The most

The records show that among the Methodists the alienation developed sooner than in any of the other churches. "As early as 1820," according to an investigator, "the colored members of the Ebenezer Church on Fourth Street, East, near Virginia Avenue, erected a log building in that vicinity, not far from the present Odd Fellow's lodge, for their social, religious meetings and Sabbath school. About the same time some of the leading members among them, George Bell and George Hicks, became dissatisfied with their treatment, withdrew, and organized a church in connection with the African Methodist Episcopal church. At first they worshipped in Basil Sim's Rope-walk, First Street east, near Pennsylvania Avenue, but subsequently in Rev. Mr. Wheat's school-house on Capitol Hill, near Virginia Avenue. They finally purchased the old First Presbyterian Church at the foot of Capitol Hill, later known as the Israel Bethel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Some years thereafter other members of the old Ebenezer Church, not liking their confined quarters in the gallery, and otherwise discontented, purchased a lot on the corner of C Street south and Fifth Street east, built a house of worship, and organized the "Little Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church."²

About the year 1825 a third colonization from the original Ebenezer Church took place. One grievance among others was that the Negro members were dissatisfied with their white pastors because they declined to take the Negro children into their arms when administering the rites of baptism. In 1839 this alienation developed into an open rupture, when thirteen class leaders and one exhorter left the mother church, and, after purchasing a lot on the Island, erected a house and formed a Negro church, independent of the Methodist Episcopal body, under the name of the Wes-

important source was the *Special Report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education on the Schools of the District of Columbia*, pp. 197 et seq.

² *Special Report of the United States Commissioner of Education on the Schools of the District of Columbia*, pp. 195-197.

ley Zion Church, and employed a Negro preacher. Among the prominent men in this separation were Enoch Ambush, the well-known schoolmaster, and Anthony Bowen, who for many years was an estimable employee in the Department of the Interior.³ Mr. Bowen served as a local preacher for forty years, and under his guidance St. Paul's Negro Church on the Island was organized, at first worshipping in E Street Chapel.^{3a}

The white Methodists of Georgetown elbowed their Negro membership out of their meeting house, but for fourteen years, that is, until 1830, they kept no written church records except a list of this one sold to Georgia, another to Carolina, a third to Louisiana, and others to different parts—annals befitting the time and place, and a searchlight on conditions then prevailing at the National Capitol and elsewhere south of the Mason and Dixon line. In 1830 the membership was large and much spirituality was manifested. White ministers of more than local note were anxious to serve these people. At the instance of one of them, Mr. Roszel, the church was first called Mount Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, because it was located on a hill. The feasibility of having Negro ministers to preside over Negro churches was proposed in 1849 and was a fruitful theme for several years.⁴ In fact, it was due to this effort that the

³ *Special Report of the United States Commissioner of Education on the Schools of the District of Columbia.*

^{3a} After the Civil War "Little Ebenezer" entered upon a new career. The white pastors who up to this time had been serving this congregation were replaced by ministers of color, the first one being Noah Jones. About 1874 the property of the church was transferred from the white church to the local organization. Placed upon this advantageous basis, the success of this congregation soon entitled that church to rank among the leading Negro churches of the city. C. G. Keyes built the first church edifice. Under C. G. Walker, who came later, there were added so many more new members that a new building was necessary to accommodate the congregation. Then came W. H. Draper, Alexander Dennis, and finally Dr. M. W. Clair. Using the plans devised by Dr. M. W. Clair, now Bishop of the M. E. Church, John H. Griffin built the edifice which is today used by the Ebenezer Church. This church was later served by W. T. Harris, E. W. S. Peck, and more recently by the efficient S. H. Brown and W. H. Dean, who did much to promote the religious life and expand the work of the present flourishing congregation now under the direction of J. W. Waters.

⁴ From records preserved by Miss H. H. Beason.

organization of Union Wesley A. M. E., the John Wesley, and Ebenezer Churches followed. John Brent, a member of Mt. Zion, led in the first named movement, and Clement Beckett, another reformer, espoused the organization of Ebenezer in 1856, as a church "for Negroes and by Negroes."⁵

⁵ The time for radical changes was approaching when the political discussions of the time were affecting Washington and all elements of its population. It was not until the Civil War was in its third year that Mt. Zion felt the change, and this was by the organization of the Washington Annual M. E. Conference in 1864. Had it not been effected at this time, it is doubtful if the M. E. Church would have been able to make much headway in Virginia with the Negro members who up to that time were counted a part of the M. E. South, worshipping in the same edifice as the whites and under such conditions as to give rise to little or no friction. The Civil War was in its last year, and there had been no opportunity before this time for the M. E. Church to secure Negro members to any extent. The A. M. E. Church, moreover, had already got a foothold in Norfolk and Portsmouth where the Union armies had triumphed, as early as 1862, and in 1865 the A. M. E. Zion Church secured a large following with valuable property in Petersburg.

Bishop Levi Scott, who organized the Washington Conference, was not concerned primarily for such churches in Baltimore as Sharp Street, Asbury, and Mt. Zion in Washington, but he was looking beyond the Potomac. At any rate he organized with four members and in 1864 sent to Mt. Zion Rev. John H. Brice, who thus became their first Negro pastor. Mt. Zion then had a membership of 317. Rev. Mr. Brice was reappointed in 1865. He was succeeded in 1866 by Rev. N. W. Carroll, whose career as an aggressive minister is that of one of the very first in his denomination. Rev. Mr. Carroll served three years and was an elder when his successor, Rev. Henry R. Elbert, was appointed in 1869.

Following Mr. Elbert came Rev. G. T. Pinkney, under whose administration the planning of a new structure first took form, and \$1,500 for the purpose was deposited in the Freedmen's Bank. Rev. Mr. Pinkney was succeeded by Rev. George Lewis, who raised \$1,600 for the building fund. Then came the Rev. Benjamin Brown, one of the useful pastors of the Negro church, a man whose reputation was coextensive with the confines of the Washington Conference, which at that time included Virginia and West Virginia as well as Maryland and the District of Columbia.

The desire for a new edifice increased, and the people contributed liberally. At the time of the suspension of the Freedmen's Bank in 1874 the church had on deposit \$2,500. The effect of the failure of the bank was most disastrous. There was a cessation of effort for a time, but under the magnetic and masterly leadership of Rev. Mr. Brown the people rallied, and \$624 was collected in one day toward the new building. The time had come for a forward movement. The members were called together March 24, 1875. The question of rebuilding was discussed thoroughly and with but ten dissenting votes the proposition was endorsed and the trustees, thus empowered, undertook the purchase of a lot on

The beginnings of the Israel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church centered around the evangelical activity of David Smith, a native of Baltimore, the most energetic of individual forces in the organization of the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in the city of Washington. The presence of a Negro preacher was objectionable to many Negroes themselves. As early as 1821 Mr. Smith was assigned to Washington but his coming was the signal for personal attack, and he was mobbed by members of his own race, communicants of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who were opposed to the African Methodists. He persisted, however, and having secured an old school house for \$300, entered upon his work with such zeal and energy that he commanded success. Among the men and women active in the first efforts were Scipio Beans, George Simms, Peter Schureman, George Hicks, Dora Bowen, William Costin, William Datcher, William Warren and George Bell, one of the three colored men who fifteen years before had erected a building for a Negro school.

Israel promptly became a member of the Baltimore Conference, one of the oldest conferences of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The first Negro conference to meet in Washington was held in Israel during the administration

Twenty-ninth Street, between Dunbarton and O Streets, from Mr. Alfred Pope, one of their number, for \$25.

The work on the new edifice was begun. Meanwhile Rev. Mr. Brown was reappointed and the cornerstone was laid, the ceremony being performed by the Good Samaritans. Then came Rev. R. A. Read, who subsequently became pastor at Asbury. Rev. James Dansbury followed Mr. Brown and gave a good account of himself. In 1880 Rev. James D. S. Hall, an eloquent preacher, who had done very creditable work in different parts of the country and who had served successfully in the A. M. E. Church as well as in the M. E. Conferences, was appointed. His appointment was the signal for new life. The cornerstone was relaid, this time under the authority of the Masons. The next morning the building when only five feet high was discovered on fire. Dissatisfaction crept in the flock, lawsuits followed, and there was formed a separate A. M. E. body, with Rev. James T. Morris as its first pastor. Mt. Zion kept on nevertheless, and the first services were held in the new structure October 30, 1880, although the building was without roof or plaster. The subsequent history of Mt. Zion until the close of the nineteenth century was notable for its steady progress.

of Andrew Jackson. Its assembly caused a sensation and gave the church and the denomination a standing surpassing that of all other Negro churches in the community. It was also largely through the personalities of the ministers in charge of Israel that its influence on its congregation and through them on the community must be judged. Among those in the period of its African Methodist affiliation were David Smith, Clayton Durham, John and William Cornish, James A. Shorter, Daniel A. Payne, Samuel Watts, Jeremiah R. V. Thomas, Henry M. Turner, William H. Hunter, George T. Watkins, James H. A. Johnson, and finally Jacob M. Mitchell, the last of the African Methodist Episcopal pastors at Israel. Smith and Durham were colleagues of Richard Allen; William Cornish was in the antislavery struggle; Hunter and Turner served as chaplains in the Union Army; and Payne, Wayman, Shorter and Turner became bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The career of Bishop Payne is widely known, but some incidents in his pastorate deserve emphasis. Under a prevailing law he had to secure a bond of one thousand dollars before he could remain in the District of Columbia and officiate as a minister. The building being without pews and the people too poor to buy them, Payne, who had learned the trade of a carpenter, bought tools, threw off his coat, and, with the aid of the society furnishing the lumber, in a few weeks seated the basement of the church. The first Negro ministers' union in Washington was organized by Bishop Payne, the other two members being John F. Cook of the Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church and Levi Collins of Wesley Zion.

It was during the Civil War, however, that the influence of Israel was at its maximum. Then it was that the intellectual genius, the fiery pulpit orator, the daring and unique Henry McNeal Turner, was not only a conspicuous preacher but preeminent as a national character. These were stirring times. All eyes were on Washington. Israel Church played a leading part in the drama. Here the mem-

bers of Congress, prominent among whom at the time were Benjamin F. Wade, Thaddeus Stevens and Henry Wilson, addressed the Negro citizens on the dominant issues of the day, buoying them up in the midst of their darkness and gloom. At this time the Israel Lyceum was an institution not unlike the Bethel Literary Association of thirty years later, that drew the most intellectual men to listen to lectures, participate in discussions, and read dissertations on timely topics.⁶

In reckoning the influence⁷ of this church the individuals whose place was in the pew must not be forgotten. The minister passes from church to church; the layman remains. In hurried review there comes to mind Alethea Tanner, who rescued the church when it was about to be sold at auction. There were Geogre Bell and Enoch Ambush, who operated in this church basement a large school which was maintained for thirty-two years. Honorable mention belongs here also to Rev. William Nichols whom, because of his high ideals, Bishop Payne, in his *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church from 1816 to 1856*, classed as "a man of more than ordinary intelligence firmly opposed to the extravagant zeal and rude manners which characterized so many of the leading men of his denomination." He was the "veritable hero who had aided the martyred Torrey in covering the escape of many slaves from the District of Columbia to Canada and who when by accident he learned that suspicion rested on him the fear of arrest was so great

⁶ In 1869 a bill passed both houses of Congress to transfer the authority of the separate management of the Negro schools to the white board. The colored people became alarmed. Israel Church opened its doors for a mass meeting and under the leadership of John F. Cook a strong protest against the legislation was voiced. The other churches were asked to follow and endorse the stand taken at Israel. They did so; the President, Andrew Johnson, refused to sign the bill and the schools remained intact under Negro management until 1900.

⁷ Israel was the church above all which made itself an example for other independent churches in Washington. Mt. Zion in Georgetown had been acting as an organized church since 1816. Until 1830, however, it had no records. It had no Negro pastor for forty-eight years and no trustees until 1866.

on his mind as to induce the paralysis which led to his (Nicoll's) sudden death."⁸

Some years later a sermon preached at Israel by Bishop John M. Brown, to whom the writer was a listener, deeply stirred the congregation. At the time I did not understand what caused the tumult until I learned from Rev. James Reid, a local preacher, that the church was negotiating for another lot on which to erect a new building, and the contention was whether the title to the new site should be held in trust for the congregation or for the denomination. The people contended that the property should be held in trust for them; the bishop, on the other hand, maintained that it should be in the name of the trustees of the denomination. The people were insistent and won their contention. A step further was the repudiation of the appointment made for them by the bishop, and the severance of their relations with the A. M. E. church made them independent. After a short interval Israel joined the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, which had been set apart in 1870 by the M. E. Church, South.⁹

During these years the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church was also in the making. Certain records show January 15, 1836, as the date of the organization of the Asbury Aid Society. These workers were originally a part of the Old Foundry Church. When this congregation augmented so that the gallery occupied by the Negro membership became too congested for their accommodation, it became necessary to find more suitable quarters. The old Smothers School House on H Street near Fourteenth was rented for their use, but it, too, became inadequate, making the purchase of ground on which to build an immediate necessity.

⁸ Payne, *History of the A. M. E. Church*, p. 38.

⁹ Some of the strongest men in that denomination were sent to Israel. Charles Wesley Fitzhugh, Charles H. Phillips, R. S. Williams, N. S. Cleaves, and S. B. Wallace were among the number. Phillips, Williams, and Cleaves became bishops, while Dr. Wallace, who died while pastor in 1895, was certainly one of the foremost pulpit orators in any of the Negro churches, without exception, during the nineteenth century.

Thomas Johnson, Lewis Delaney, and Benjamin M. McCoy were constituted the building committee that secured from William Billings the lot on which the church was ultimately built. The Foundry Quarterly Conference, under whose authority they were functioning, elected trustees and a building committee to secure funds and pay for the building, but no regular church organization was immediately effected. These communicants remained under the sole management and control of the Foundry Church until the organization of the Washington Conference in the Civil War. Originally there were two Negro preachers, one a deacon, the other a licentiate, and two exhorters in these early days. There were three stewards, two black and one white. These constituted the officary and were members of the Foundry Quarterly Conference.

After the Annual Conference of 1841, when there were, according to the stewards' records, 423 Negro members, an appeal was made to the Quarterly Conference of the Foundry for a preacher to take more direct supervision of the church. By order of the bishop, Rev. James M. Hanson, a supernumerary of the Foundry Church was appointed to take the charge of Asbury as its regular minister. Though a separate charge, Asbury was not a separate station, and it continued in subordination to the Foundry Church. After Hanson's appointment, regular weekly meetings were established, but the white leaders did not seem to succeed, for four of them had by this time resigned. In 1845 there was but one white leader remaining, and he did not meet regularly with the Negro leaders.¹⁰ Again in 1851, therefore, there was an appeal to the presiding bishop and elders of the Baltimore Annual Conference (white) praying for a separate establishment,¹¹ and the request was finally granted in the Civil War.

¹⁰ From the records of this church.

¹¹ At this time there were eighteen classes at the Asbury and a membership of about 640. A financial report for the year ending March 30, 1850, shows receipts of \$829.17½. Ten years later the stewards' financial report gives \$798.01. At the dedication of Asbury in 1869 a review of its history was given by Benjamin

Union Bethel (Metropolitan) A. M. E. Church was organized July 6, 1838, as a branch of Israel A. M. E., with Clayton Durham as pastor, assisted by John Cornish. They met in a little house which stood in the rear of one Mr. Bolden's residence on L Street near Fifteenth Street. William H. Moore took charge in 1840, after which regular appointments annually followed. In 1841 there served one Mr. Moore, who was reappointed, and in 1842 Edward Waters began an incumbency of two years. In 1844 Adam S. Driver became pastor and remained two years. He was succeeded in 1847 by Thomas W. Henry. In 1848 Alexander Washington Wayman, whose name frequently figures in the history of the church and denomination, appeared on the scene, followed in 1850 by W. H. Moore. In 1851 Wayman returned to Union Bethel and remained two years. In 1853 John R. V. Morgan, destined to occupy a unique figure because of his oratorical ability, was pastor. Savage L. Hammond, who was appointed in 1854, served also the next year.¹²

The first work towards the erection of the present Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, first known as Union Bethel, was begun by John W. Stevenson, who was transferred from the New Jersey Conference and appointed by Bishop D. A. Payne for the specific purpose. McCoy, who was the most influential personage in the history of this church. He was a colleague of John F. Cook, Sr. An extract from a report submitted by him is very interesting, showing for the building the amount of the debt of the old Asbury, \$15,354.97, on which \$11,610.97 was paid Downing and Brothers, \$3,744 to Rogers and Cissil, \$1,257.48 paid to Morsell and Dearing, leaving a balance of \$2,486.52.

¹² The order then follows: W. H. Waters, 1856; John J. Herbert, 1857; Michael F. Sluy, 1858; Alexander W. Wayman, 1859; Daniel W. Moore, 1860-1861; James A. Handy, 1864 (6 weeks); James D. S. Hall, 1864, 1865; James A. Handy, 1866, 1867; Richard A. Hall, 1868, 1869; Daniel P. Seaton, M.D., 1870, 1871; Daniel Draper, 1872, 1873; Richard A. Hall, 1874; Joseph S. Thompson, 1875, 1876; George W. Brodie, 1877, 1878, 1879; Rev. John W. Stevenson, 1880, 1881.

Union Bethel finally became the Metropolitan Church in 1881. James A. Handy served in 1882, 1883, 1884; after which came Rev. George T. Watkins, 1885; Theophilus G. Steward in 1886 and 1887, and John T. Mitchell in 1888 and 1889.

pose of erecting the new building. He entered upon his work with great zeal and alacrity, but pursued methods which, though adapted to or suitable in the localities in which he had hitherto labored with such phenomenal success, occasioned much friction and disgust in Washington. He catered to elements that would relegate the more cultured and progressive classes to the background, yet he secured among the conservatives loyal support. At the end of his first year, however, the spirit of rebellion was rife. A delegation of the discontented element called on the presiding bishop to state their grievance and effect the removal of the irrepressible minister, but Bishop Payne was inexorable. He did not even give an actual hearing to the petitioners, although they were personally known to him to be some of the most faithful adherents of African Methodism. The next step was open rebellion. Meetings were held by the dissatisfied group and in the month of June more than a hundred and fifty persons, after the question of forming a new religious organization had been carefully canvassed, agreed to sever their connection with their spiritual mother and raise their "Ebenezer" elsewhere. Notwithstanding this opposition within and without, however, the old edifice was pulled down and work on the new building was immediately begun.

The corner stone was laid in September, 1881, with appropriate ceremonies under the auspices of the Masons. During the work on the building, which was continued up to the fall of 1885, services were held in the Hall on M Street diagonally opposite the square to the west. By the end of Stevenson's second year, he had, by his characteristic methods, alienated so many of those on whom he had relied mainly for support that Bishop Payne, now disillusioned, was as bitter against Stevenson as he was blindly his champion the year before.¹⁸ Stevenson was removed, but there

¹⁸ The organization of the Bethel Literary and Historical Association by Bishop Payne in the early autumn of 1881 was an event worth chronicling because of its immediate influence on the individual church, the community, the denomination and the entire country. For twenty-five years the Bethel Literary

were those who still believed in his leadership. He refused to accept the appointment given him and organized the Central Methodist Church with dissentients formerly members of Union Bethel. James A. Handy was appointed Stevenson's successor at this juncture, yet there was considerable opposition even among those regarded as his firm personal and political friends.¹⁴ The building was finally

in the fall and winter seasons was recognized as an intellectual clearing house. In distant communities the reflex influence was just as unmistakable because of the newspapers, whose Washington correspondents did not fail to register the utterances and the discussions which the Literary occasioned.

¹⁴ Union Bethel became the Metropolitan A. M. E. Church by order of the General Conference of 1872, affirmed by that of 1876 and reaffirmed by its successor in 1880.

The church building is 80 x 120 with a sub-basement for domestic purposes and a basement above grade containing lecture, Sunday School, library, and class rooms. The cost was \$70,000 on ground, the assessed valuation of which at the time of the erection of the edifice was \$25,000. The cornerstone was laid in 1881. The basement was opened for divine worship November 8, 1885, and dedicated by Bishop A. W. Nayman, Dr. J. A. Handy, Dr. B. W. Arnett, and Dr. G. T. Watkins, pastor. On the completion of the main auditorium services were first held Sunday, May 30, 1886. When dedication features extending one week took place, John A. Simms, Andrew Twine, William Beckett, John Shorter, George C. Brown, James Washington, Walter F. Hyson, George R. Dalley, and J. T. Harris were the trustees.

In 1886 the new edifice was dedicated with elaborate exercises. T. G. Steward was the first pastor to serve in the new building. After an administration of two years he was succeeded by Dr. John G. Mitchell. John W. Beckett followed Dr. Mitchell in 1889 and remained three years. In 1873 John T. Jenifer, who bears the distinction of being a member of the first graduating class of Wilberforce University, was appointed and served three years. He was succeeded in 1896 by John Albert Johnson, who served a term of five years with unusual success. Daniel J. Hill followed J. Albert Johnson and remained two years. Oscar J. W. Scott, who followed in 1903, filled out three terms and was serving his fourth when he received an appointment as Chaplain in the 24th United States Infantry to succeed Chaplain T. G. Steward. John H. Welch, named to succeed J. W. Scott, served two years and was appointed for the third when he suddenly passed away to the intense sorrow of his congregation. Dr. Isaac N. Ross began in 1909 an incumbency of five years.

In 1914 Dr. C. Harold Stepteanu succeeded Dr. Ross and remained for three years. Dr. Stepteanu was succeeded in 1917 by Rev. Carlton M. Tanner. He at once bent his efforts toward the reduction of the debt which had handicapped the progress of the church for a generation. Such was his success that within two years he accomplished what had been regarded as an impossible task. The event was made an occasion for great rejoicing, culminating in a thanksgiving service Monday evening, January 27, 1919, which included among other features

completed. By a vote of the African Methodist Episcopal Conference in 1872 the name was changed from Union Bethel to Metropolitan.

The same forces tending toward separation were at this time at work also among the Negro Baptist members in the white churches. This was the case of the First Baptist Church (white) organized in 1802. Its Negro members worshipped at first on the basis of equality with the whites, but this came to an end when the Negro members were assigned to the gallery, just as other churches of this time were gradually segregating them. When the new white Baptist Church, which was afterward sold and converted into a theater later known as Ford's Theater, was built on Tenth Street, the Negro communicants were given the gallery, but this was not satisfactory to the majority, who chafed under the new arrangement. O. B. Brown, the pastor, however, tried under the circumstances to treat the Negro members with as much charity as his prejudiced members would permit, as he was a kind-hearted man and did not believe in distinction on account of color. When the Tenth Street Church was occupied in 1833, therefore, these discontented members bought the old church on the corner of 19th and I Streets, Northwest, which is still held by that congregation and known throughout the country as the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

This was the first church of the denomination among the Negroes of the District of Columbia. It was organized August 29, 1839, by Sampson White, a Negro, assisted by John Healy and S. P. Hill, white pastors of Baltimore, and Moses Clayton, a Negro minister, who was the founder and pastor of the first Negro Baptist church of Baltimore. The original members were William Bush, Eliza Bush, Lavinia Perry and Emily Coke. The accession of Sampson

an address by the pastor, Dr. Tanner, one by the presiding Bishop, John Albert Johnson, and an original poem by Dr. Robert E. Ford. The most spectacular number was the burning of the fourteen thousand dollar mortgage deed in the presence of the vast audience, the taper being applied by a committee of elderly members who had been connected with the church for a score or more of years.

White and wife increased the membership to six. None of these had been members of any church in the District of Columbia. They held letters from churches elsewhere, and so were free to form a church of their own in this city. But the white Baptist church, which had worshipped at 19th and I Streets, Northwest, from the year of their organization, from 1802 to 1833, had many Negro members who worshipped at 19th and I Streets for six years before Sampson White organized his small congregation.

These Negro members of the white church, being separated in worship from their white brethren, and having become sole owners of the house of worship which formerly they and the whites owned as members of the white church, wished to be organized as a separate body. This was refused. Sampson White, therefore, organized the First Negro Baptist Church of Washington, with persons not of the Washington white church, and thereby secured the recognition of his church by the leading white and Negro Baptists of Baltimore. In less than sixty days he had it in the oldest and best known white Baptist connection in America, the Philadelphia Baptist Association. This accomplished, Sampson White's little group received into their body all of the Negro members of the white church, except about twenty-three. These additional members made this a congregation ten times the size of the original body. This larger group, too, was in possession of the property at 19th and I Streets, at the time that the founders received them as members, and having been in possession of the property from the time it was sold to the Negro members of the First Baptist Church, white, these Negro Baptists, thereafter worshipping as the First Negro Baptist Church, insisted that the property was theirs, while the few colored members of the white church, who did not leave the parent body, claimed the property as belonging to them. This led to a law suit which lasted for years, but finally all the Negro members of the First Baptist Church, white, cast in their lot with the members at 19th and I Streets, and the trustees of the white

church kindly released all claim in behalf of Negro members of that body, and rendered the deed clear.¹⁵

The first pastorate of Sampson White was short. He was followed by William Williams. Under his labors the membership increased almost to two hundred. But the latter part of his incumbency was not peaceful and William Bush, and others of the church withdrew. After casting their lot with the white Second Baptist Church near the Navy Yard, these seceders, along with others, were constituted the Second Negro Baptist Church of this city, with H. Butler, a former member of the church at 19th and I Streets, as pastor.

Following William Williams came Martin Jenkins as a supply. In 1849 Gustavus Brown became pastor, remaining for a short while. He was succeeded by Sampson White, who, serving the congregation a second time, remained with the church until 1853. Chauncey A. Leonard was the next pastor, and after him Samuel M. Madden. At the close of the Civil War, D. W. Anderson became pastor and for seven years labored for the good of his church. During his ministry in Washington the church added to its membership a thousand or more, chiefly as the result of the additions to this city from the Negro population of the ex-slaves of the South. But D. W. Anderson, as a man of great heart, labored for all Washington. Under his leadership the Metropolitan and Vermont Avenue Baptist churches were organized. The Nineteenth Street Baptist Church building which had been altered and improved from time to time, before his pastorate, was demolished and a new edifice erected in 1871. In 1872, D. W. Anderson passed to his reward and the church erected a marble shaft in the

¹⁵ One has said that not long thereafter they employed as temporary pastor the Rev. Mr. Nickens, whose coming being unacceptable to some members of the congregation, caused about thirty to secede, organizing a church by themselves. These seceding members were expelled and, as the church property was deeded to the members of the church, there ensued a controversy as to the title of the church, which for a number of years was in litigation between the mother church and her offspring. See the *Special Report of the United States Commissioner of Education on the Schools of D. C.*, 311.

Harmony Cemetery to mark the place where his remains lie.

Anthony Binga, Sr., of Canada, followed D. W. Anderson, but his pastorate was short. His successor was Jesse Boulden, of Mississippi, who occupied the pulpit for about four years. During his pastorate thirty members withdrew, and formed the Berean Baptist Church. Sometime before this, the Salem Baptist Church had been constituted with members from the churches of which Anderson, Binga and Boulden had been pastors.¹⁶

The pastorate of Dr. Walter H. Brooks is the outstanding one in the history of the church, extending from November 12, 1882, until the present writing, the third decade of the twentieth century. During his ministrations more than 3,500 have joined the church, 1,500 of whom were personally baptized by him. The financial condition of the church places it among the best managed churches in the country, although it has at times assumed heavy obligations in making improvements and in rebuilding. During the pastorate of Dr. Brooks a number of ministers and preachers have gone forth from the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church. Dr. J. L. Dart, the founder of an important education and missionary work in South Carolina, was ordained at this church. Dr. James R. L. Diggs, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, and head of important educational work in Baltimore, is of this congregation, having been baptized and ordained by Dr. Brooks. E. E. Rick, of Newark, N. J., was ordained from the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church. James L. Pinn is a product of this body, and Dr. Brooks was influential in securing for him his first charge. John H. Burke, pastor of Israel Baptist Church, came up under Dr. Brooks, as did also Joseph Lee, of Arlington, Virginia, and James L. Jasper, of Brentwood, Maryland. But none of these products of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church have done a better work than Miss Jennie Deane, the founder of the Manassas Industrial School, in Virginia, and

¹⁶ During his school days Rev. Harvey Johnson of Baltimore was a follower of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church.

Miss Nannie H. Burroughs, the founder and promoter of the National Training School for Women and Girls, Lincoln Heights, Washington, D. C. Nor should Mrs. Laura Queen be forgotten, for by her labors the doors of Stoddard Baptist Home were first opened.¹⁷

The Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church, the next to be established, was formally organized November 21, 1841, in a little frame school house located on H Street near 14th Northwest. The moving spirit in this undertaking was John F. Cook.¹⁸ He had been received as a licentiate by the Presbytery of the District of Columbia on the twenty-first of October of that same year. Eighteen persons took part in this organization. Of these John F. Cook and Alfred A. Cook had been official members of the Union Bethel, now the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church. The pioneer members came from the First, the Second, and the Fourth Presbyterian Churches of the city and one from the Shiloh Church of New York, of which the Rev. Theodore S. Wright was pastor. The reasons why they desired the establishment of an independent church were clearly set forth in a series of resolutions which were not unlike those which occasioned the organization of other Negro churches. The new society was received into the Presbytery May 3, 1842, when in session at Alexandria, Virginia, then a part of the District of Columbia. John F. Cook was installed as

¹⁷ This account was given by the present pastor of this church, Dr. W. H. Brooks.

The deacons during Dr. Brooks's pastorate have included some of the foremost men in the community. Such men are William Coke, who was a deacon in 1840, John H. Beale, Nathaniel Gilmer, Henry Jarvis, Linsey Muse, Albert Parker, William P. Pierre and William Syphax, while among the trustees will be recalled Carter A. Stewart, Charles Lemos, David Clark, William B. Brooks, W. A. Johnson, Edgar Ball and John H. Hunter. Among the local churches either directly or indirectly originated in the Nineteenth Street Church are the Vermont Avenue, the Metropolitan, Berean, Pilgrim of Brentwood, Salem and Israel Baptist Churches.

¹⁸ The following persons constituted the church: John F. Cook, David Carroll, Jane Noland, Mary Ann Tilghman, Clement Talbert, Lydia Williams, Elizabeth Carroll, Ann Brown, Charles Bruce, Basil Gutridge, Clarissa Forest, John Madison, Catherine Madison, Ann Chew, Ruth Smith, Emily Norris, Maria Newton, Alfred Cook and Eliza Stewart.

the first pastor July 14, 1855. Under his pastorate the church prospered, increasing its membership to 125.

The successor of Mr. Cook was William T. Catto of Philadelphia, the former pastor of the First African Presbyterian Church of the country. Others to occupy the pulpit as supplies and pastors were Benjamin T. Tanner, subsequently a bishop of the A. M. E. Church, William B. Evans, Henry Highland Garnet, J. H. Muse, J. Sella Martin, John B. Reeves, during his connection with Howard University, Dr. Septimus Tustin, George Van Deurs, a Swede, and John Brown, a Scotchman. The last mentioned incumbent was succeeded by the Rev. Francis J. Grimké, who has served longer than all other pastors combined, and with marked success. During the first years of the ministry of Mr. Grimké, which began in the spring of 1878, there was great spiritual awakening as the result of his forceful preaching.

The church has had a high record for its Christian ideals and its public spirit. It has always stood for the best things, morally and spiritually, in the life of the community. It has always been ready to aid in every worthy cause. During the period immediately preceding the Civil War, and in the days of the reconstruction, it divided honors with the Israel Church as a place of popular assembly and referendum. In 1918 it sold its old edifice on 15th Street between I and K Streets, where it had worshipped for seventy-five years, and is now located in a beautiful and commodious structure on the corner of R and Fifteenth Streets.

The next significant effort was made by the Baptists. Persons dismissed from the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church for the purpose of organizing another body began in the year 1848 the existence of the Second Baptist Church, under the leadership of H. H. Butler, a licentiate. The next year Jeremiah Asher, a native of Connecticut, became

¹⁰ See F. J. Grimke's *Anniversary Address on the Occasion of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church*.

the first pastor and remained for two years. Mr. Asher was a typical New Englander of superior education and high ideals. In 1850 Gustavus Brown assumed charge of the new body when it worshipped on B Street, Southwest, between Sixth and Seventh, in a broom factory, and subsequently at 9th and D Streets, Northwest, over Ryan's Grocery Store. In 1853 H. H. Butler was recalled and formally ordained as pastor. He remained with the church until his death in 1856, when Sandy Alexander was asked to accept this charge. A permanent home was then bought on the present site where the congregation has worshipped ever since. Mr. Alexander continued for five years until his health compelled him to retire. In 1861, Caleb Woodyard became pastor and remained for two years. During this period conditions were such that progress was not steady and this led to the recall of Mr. Alexander, under whose direction a strong organization was effected. Following him, came Chauncey A. Leonard and next John Gaines. Then followed Madison Gaskins, whose service was characterized by alternating conditions, a lawsuit, a fire and new organizations branching therefrom as Mount Carmel, Mt. Olive in the Northeast, and Rehoboth in the Southwest.²⁰

²⁰ A statement verified by the present pastor, Dr. J. L. S. Holloman.

In 1883 Dr. William Bishop Johnson accepted the call to the pastorate which, notwithstanding its nearly forty years of struggle, had been reduced to a membership of less than one hundred. During Dr. Johnson's pastorate a church edifice was erected in 1895 at a cost of \$75,000, one of the largest and most imposing in the city. An outstanding feature of Dr. Johnson's administration was the organization of a Sunday School Lyceum in 1885 which was one of the most popular literary organizations in the Capitol, meeting Sunday afternoons, when there were discussions of some foremost topic by representative thinkers of both sexes and races. Notable among the presidents of the Sunday School Lyceum were Mr. Jesse Lawson, Mr. R. D. Ruffin, and Mr. R. W. Thompson, the newspaper correspondent. Johnson died in 1917 mourned by the congregation and community as one of its leading preachers. Through his administration of the affairs the church became one of the best known throughout the country because of the organizing abilities of the pastor and his unusual ability. In 1917 the church called as pastor Dr. J. L. S. Holloman of Winton, North Carolina. During his four years of service the church has been practically freed of debt and has entered on a new era of progress.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches of Washington, D. C., grew out of the efforts of their denomination, founded by James Varick, Peter Williams, William Miller, Abraham Thompson, Christopher Rush and others, in New York City, in 1796. These fathers early extended their work through New England, western New York, central and western Pennsylvania. In 1833, their first church was founded in South Washington, then known as the Island. It was established as the Metropolitan Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, on D Street, Southwest, Washington, D. C. The first pastor was Abraham Cole, who took charge in 1833. The persons organizing this church were originally members of the Ebenezer M. E. Church, located on D Street, Southeast. They drew out of this organization because their pastor, a white man, held slaves. The Wesley Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, its officers contend, was the first independent church in the District of Columbia organized by colored people. The first public school for the training of Negro youth was held in this church. Hanson Brooks was the secretary of the first organization.²¹

The establishment of the Union Wesley, the second church of the Zionites, in Washington, the progressive body, of which Dr. E. D. W. Jones was pastor, was very interesting. This church was organized in 1848 by Bishop J. J. Clinton, who afterwards became a bright star in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The organization took place in the residence of Gasoway Waters in Georgetown.²² He had been sent to Georgetown as a missionary and started his labors in this organization of a few persons determined to become independent of the white Methodists.

They began the construction of a church with the help of such men and women as Charles Lemon, Charly Wilson,

²¹ The present building was erected about 1886, by Dr. R. H. G. Dyson. The present pastor is Rev. H. J. Callis, who easily takes rank in the city as one of its leading public-spirited influences.

²² This story is taken largely from records preserved by Mr. B. J. Grant, one of the oldest members of this church.

Eliza Wilson, William Crusoe, George Brown, Mary Brown, William Sewall, Margaret Waters, and Eliza Johnson. After having been organized for a little while, they bought a lot on the corner of what is now known as 28th and O Streets, Georgetown.²³ Things seemed favorable in the beginning, but the enemies of the church were busy those days putting temptation in the path of the Negro and betraying him unto his enemies. Bondmen, according to the slave code, were not allowed to meet or hold any kind of meeting unless a white man was present. Nor were they allowed to be out after ten o'clock at night without a pass, or to have two or more congregate on the street at one time. If they did any of these things, they thereby violated the sacred laws of bondage and suffered imprisonment and persecution. Thus handicapped in their worship, they, like Paul and Silas, prayed for a deliverer, and he came in the person of a young lawyer from Philadelphia, who had taken up the cause. By his earnest endeavors in their behalf, they were released without being sentenced to jail or whipped. But, nevertheless, they were driven out of Georgetown, across Rock Creek, and into Washington, where they worshipped for a while in the house of William Beckett on the corner of 23d and L Streets.

A short time afterwards they bought the lot where this church now stands and built thereon a frame chapel which was contemptuously called the Horseshoe Church. After they had been there but a short time, there was a funeral at the chapel one day. Across from the chapel the Hibernian fire company was stationed. While the funeral services were being held in the chapel, two of these firemen came across the street and while one of them got inside of the hearse the other one got up on the driver's seat and drove all around the streets, while the people were out looking for the hearse. When they came back, the one who was inside got out and said that he was Lazarus risen from the dead. This act so inflamed some of the white gentlemen

²³ At the present time this plot of ground is covered by the Ebenezer A. M. E. Church.

that they had the firemen arrested and prosecuted. These two impious gentlemen became so indignant because of their arrest that they set fire to the chapel and burned it to the ground. These communicants, being homeless again, went back to the house of William Beckett on L Street and commenced to rebuild. This time they succeeded in erecting a brick building, a portion of which stands today.

The John Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was organized in 1849 at the home of John Brent on Eighteenth and L Streets. Among the founders were John Brent, W. H. Johnson, John Brent, Jr., William V. Ingram, Arnold Bowie, Charles Wilson, Joseph Conner, Edward Curtis, and Gilbert Joy. These communicants then purchased property on Connecticut Avenue and built thereon a simple frame building into which they moved in 1851.²⁴ This church finally bought the old Berean Baptist Church property on Eighteenth Street, under the pastorate of Dr. B. J. Bolding, in 1902.

The ministers who pastored the congregation while it worshipped in Connecticut Avenue were Abraham Cole, J. B. Trusty, N. F. Turpin, J. H. Hamer, H. F. Butler, Nathaniel Stubbs, Sampson Talbert, S. T. Jones, John V. Givens, S. T. Henry, G. W. Bosley, S. S. Wales, J. W. Smith, J. P. Thompson, Jesse Cowles, W. A. Cypress, J. A. Williams, J. B. Small, B. J. Bolding, R. H. G. Dyson, D. H. Anderson, R. A. Fisher, J. J. Clinton, and J. H. McMullen. Those who served the body in Eighteenth Street were Rev. L. W. Kyles, W. A. Blackwell, P. H. Williams, C. C. Alleyne, and Dr. William C. Brown. John Wesley Church has had at different times six pastors, who later were elected to the bishopric. These were Bishops Sampson Talbert, J. J. Clinton, J. P. Thompson, S. T. Jones, J. B. Small and

²⁴ Two years later they erected another story, which remained intact until the church was sold. The remodeling and addition cost \$1,100. This property proved to be very valuable, as they decided after many years to make it one of its most fashionable thoroughfares. Bought for almost a pittance, this property had advanced in value to such an extent that the business interests offered a high price for it and it was sold.

John Wesley Smith, all of whom are deceased. Among the officers of the church may be mentioned Gilbert L. Joy, who was made secretary of the Trustee Board in 1864, and served thirty-two years in that capacity. He had the enviable record of being a trustee of this church for forty-three years, a longer period than that of any other person connected with it, and he is still an active member.

The awakening of John Wesley A. M. E. Zion Church, characterized by the selling of its property on Eighteenth Street to purchase at the same time the edifice on Fourteenth and Corcoran Streets for \$61,000, is significant. It is the most important event in the history of Zion Church in Washington. The Zion Church long needed a larger representative edifice in this city. This advanced step was taken, and under the leadership of Dr. W. C. Brown and Dr. W. O. Carrington the progress of the congregation has been epochal.

The Galbraith African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was founded in 1859. That year five members of Zion Wesley, under the leadership of Samuel Payne, withdrew and organized a church in a small house on L Street between Third and Fourth Streets. They subsequently built a house of worship near New York Avenue. Robert H. G. Dyson who had been active as a class leader and chorister in Zion Wesley, became the first pastor. It developed from its little frame church on L Street, Northwest, into a larger congregation in the modern structure on its present location, under N. J. Green, the pastor in charge. This church has figured conspicuously in the religious, moral and civic uplift of the city. It has been served by an array of prominent ministers, chief among whom are J. Harvey Anderson, J. S. Coles, Wm. Chambers, J. B. Colbert, H. P. Kyler, William Dixon, S. L. Corrothers, George C. Clement, and William D. Battle. During Mr. Battle's administration the church was relieved of its long-standing debt and the well begun work was steadily developed.²⁵

²⁵ A new edifice is being favorably considered to accommodate the growing congregation. A building fund has been started for this purpose.

The next efforts in the District of Columbia were of the Baptists. Albert Bouldin, who began public prayer services near Fourth and L Streets in 1857, was a prominent influence in the organization of the Third Baptist Church.²⁶ On June 20, 1858 there was held a council of ministers at which were present G. W. Sampson, Chauncey A. Leonard, A. Rothwell, Lindsey Muse, Evans Stott, Henry H. Butler, Sandy Alexander, and L. Patten. There were also the following laymen: Joseph Pryor, Joseph Alexander, N. Nookes. Henry Scott, John Minor, Charles Alexander, and Austin Robinson. The trustees were William B. Jefferson, Joseph Alexander, Henry Scott, Charles Alexander, Vernon Duff, and Henry Nookes, who assisted in effecting the organization and served it as the first deacons.

In 1863 there was secured on Fourth and L Streets a lot on which the people began to erect their meeting house. On account of disputes, four years afterward it became necessary to look elsewhere, and William B. Jefferson became the controlling spirit. Then a lot was purchased on Franklin Street between Fourth and Fifth at a cost of \$1,198.50. In September, 1871, the church was dedicated. Rev. D. W. Anderson, at that time pastor of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church, delivered the sermon. After a lapse of thirteen years, August 2, 1884, another lot situated on the corner of Fifth and Que Streets was purchased.²⁷ The next forward movement was toward the erection of a new build-

²⁶ This account was taken from the records of the Third Baptist Church.

²⁷ There were elected the following officers in 1885: W. C. Laws, Joseph Jones, Henry Hughes, James H. West, Daniel Lewis, Moten Waites, and Joseph Montgomery. P. H. Umbles officiated during the vacancy of the pulpit occasioned by the death of Mr. Jefferson, which occurred in October, 1885.

On March 19 James H. Lee of New Bedford, who had formerly been connected with the Third Baptist Church, was called to the pastorate. He accepted and preached his inaugural sermon May 9 and was installed on May 30. During the first seven years of his administration 242 members were received by baptism, 49 by letter, 62 by experience, 59 by restoration. In the same period 24 were dismissed by letter, 65 excluded and 117 lost by deaths. A debt of \$3,475.55 was paid during this period including balance due on site. The collections aggregated \$28,729.

ing which was completed July 1893 at a cost of \$26,000 and dedicated the fifth Sunday of July 1893.²⁸

There soon followed another significant undertaking. After preaching regularly to four persons for four years, Sandy Alexander organized on October 5, 1862, the First Baptist Church of West Washington. Two of the four pioneer members were from churches in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Dr. G. W. Sampson, president of Columbian College, subsequently Columbian University, now the George Washington University, was of great service to Mr. Alexander in this work of the organization of this church. The church was first located on the corner of Greene and Beale Street, Georgetown, where it remained one year, after which a lot was purchased at the corner of Dumbarton and 27th Streets and a large frame building was first constructed at a cost of \$15,000.²⁹ From this church there have been regularly organized the Macedonia, the First Baptist Church of Rosslyn, Virginia, and the Memorial Baptist Church in Maryland.

The Baptists were at the same time receiving recruits from another source. In June, 1862, while a destructive war was being waged by the Southern States against the Union, warning was given that a terrible siege was to be started against the city of Fredericksburg, Virginia. This news caused between three and four hundred members of the Shiloh Baptist Church of that town to leave for Washington as a place of refuge. After arriving there many tearful eyes were turned toward the dear old church of their childhood and riper years, where "many a pleasant hour had been enjoyed, and it was only natural for these fellow church members to plan for a place where they might once more gather in prayer and praise God for their

²⁸ The following officers were then in charge: Deacons W. L. Laws, Daniel Lewis, Joseph Jones, Joseph Montgomery, James H. West, Henry Hughes, and Moten Waites; and Trustees Alexander Peyton, Henry C. Bolden, William Reynolds, Ottawa Nichols, Richard Basey, George Duff and Dennis Johnson. After the death of Rev. James H. Lee, Rev. Mr. Bullock became the pastor.

²⁹ James L. Pinn is the present pastor, having served since September, 1916.

deliverance from the ravages of war.”³⁰ Home gatherings were frequent among these refugees and in this way the organization of the present church was effected.

Shiloh Baptist Church, like many other churches, had its beginning in a Sunday School.³¹ The constant meeting of these seekers after the truth served to keep a number of them in close touch with each other and intensified the desire for a church of their own. They then began to meet in each other's houses for prayer and for conference upon the subject and soon resolved to have a Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, since they could not return to Shiloh Church in Fredericksburg. It was at one of these prayer meetings in the bedroom of Henry D. Peyton in an old brick house on K Street, between 26th and 27th Streets, in Georgetown (now West Washington) that Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington had its beginnings in September, 1863.³²

Having formed the church, the founders sent a communication to the various Baptist churches of Washington, both white and black, asking that a council be called to consider the propriety of recognizing them as a regularly constituted Baptist church. The Negro Baptist churches gave these petitioners no encouragement and sent no delegates to the council, but the white Baptist churches sent a

³⁰ Records of the Shiloh Baptist Church.

³¹ About a year before the church was organized a number of Baptists, who with their children afterward formed the church, met in a little shanty situated at that time on the south side of L Street, just across from the present church house, and under the direction of J. McCleary Perkins, a white Union soldier, formed a Sunday School. The members of this Sunday School were largely adults of African descent, while the teachers were from both races. The Bible was the book from which morals and religion were taught, and Webster's blue-back speller was the constant companion of children and parents while they were learning to read the Word of God. James H. Payne succeeded Mr. Perkins as Superintendent of this school, and six months thereafter John M. Washington succeeded Payne. These two men alternated as superintendents of this Sunday School for ten or twelve years, and worked together faithfully until they succeeded in building up a flourishing institution.

³² Those who were in the original company that founded the church were Washington Whitlow, John J. Taylor, J. Mason Wilson, George Armstead, Edward Brook, Clement Morgan, Henry Frazier, Henry D. Payton, Griffin Saunders, Alfred Pendleton, James H. Payne, James G. Sample, Jane Brown, Elizabeth Morgan, Annie Armstead, Lucy Davis and Rev. William J. Walker.

number of their members, deacons, and pastors, as delegates, who met in the First white Baptist church, located at that time on 13th Street between G and H Streets, Northwest, at eight o'clock Wednesday evening, September 23, 1863, and formed a recognition council. Dr. G. W. Sampson, pastor of the First Baptist Church and President of Columbian College, was chosen Moderator, and John S. Poler, clerk. After approving the credentials of the delegates the Moderator stated the purpose of the meeting. He further stated that the council had also been asked to examine William J. Walker as to his fitness and qualification for the gospel ministry, and if found worthy to ordain him, as the church had called him as its pastor and recommended his ordination.³³ It was so ordered and done by the council.

³³ The Moderator then informed the members of Shiloh that the Council was ready to hear their statement, whereupon Henry Frazier, the senior deacon of the newly formed church, gave a history of the organization and prosperity of Shiloh Baptist Church in Fredericksburg, from which the members forming the new church had come. William J. Walker, who had been associated with the Fredericksburg church for about twelve years, presented some interesting facts, and added: "These brethren, who have been driven from their homes and scattered among strangers, long to be gathered into a church, that they may worship God unitedly as they formerly did." Thereupon A. Rothwell offered the following resolutions which were unanimously passed:

"Resolved, That we recognize with devout gratitude the good hand of our Heavenly Father, in delivering these, His children, from the fetters of bondage, so that they may freely serve Him, and more perfectly learn His Way, and we tender to them our cordial Christian sympathies, as well as our prayers and our aid, in maintaining their church organization.

"Resolved, also, That we heartily approve the proposition of the brethren to be recognized as a church, based upon the Christian doctrines and principles which are the foundation of our denomination, and that we will cheerfully cooperate in the services appropriate to the recognition of the Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington, D. C."

The following were the officers of the newly formed church: Deacons Henry Frazier, Clement Morgan, James G. Semple, Edward Brook, James H. Payne, Henry D. Payton and Alfred Pendleton; Trustees William J. Walker, Edward Brook, John J. Taylor, James H. Payne, Griffin Saunders, Washington Whitlow and Henry D. Payton; John J. Taylor, church clerk, and J. McCleary Perkins, Superintendent of the Sunday School.

William J. Walker, the first pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, was a native of Fredericksburg, Virginia. He was born of free parents and was about 72

The church continued to meet in the homes of the members, but it grew so rapidly that it soon became necessary to secure larger quarters. The little frame building on the north side of L Street, between 16th and 17th Northwest, was then bought, and the church moved into it and remained there until 1868. The church prospered greatly and soon outgrew its first meeting house. Steps were then taken to purchase a site and erect a building sufficiently large to accommodate the growing membership. The present lot was secured, and in 1868 a commodious frame structure was erected thereon and used until 1883, when the church tore down the frame building and erected upon the same spot the present brick edifice.

William J. Walker, the first pastor, played a large part in building up the Baptist denomination in the District of Columbia and adjoining States. He organized four churches in Washington, namely, Zion Baptist, Enon Baptist, Mt. Zion Baptist and Mt. Jezreel Baptist churches, and two churches in Virginia, all of which are strong and prosperous organizations. He also founded the Baptist Sunday School Union and the Woman's Baptist Home Mission Society.

For a year or more after the death of William J. Walker the church remained without a pastor. During the greater part of this time William H. Scott served as supply, and it was while he was serving the church that the Walker Memorial Baptist Church was formed out of the members who drew out of Shiloh. Dr. J. Anderson Taylor became pastor in 1890 and remained with the church until near the close of 1906. During his ministry the church greatly increased in membership, and enlarged its building at a cost of \$10,000. When Dr. Taylor gave up the pastorate of the church about 200 members withdrew from Shiloh and formed the Trinity Baptist Church and called him to take charge thereof. Shiloh Baptist Church, then, has been di-

years of age at the time of his death, in 1889. He was a printer by trade, and enjoyed considerable educational advantages for the times in which he lived. He was a wise leader, an untiring worker, and a faithful and able minister of the gospel.

vided twice within twenty-three years. In spite of these handicaps, however, the church has prospered financially, numerically and spiritually. Dr. J. Milton Waldron took formal charge of Shiloh Baptist Church on the 6th of June 1907 and has labored with success in edifying his congregation and extending the influence of the church.³⁴

While the organization of Shiloh Church was being effected in the northern section of Washington, there was in the southwest also another group from Fredericksburg. This effort resulted in the establishment of the Zion Baptist Church. They first organized a Sunday and day school in Jackson's School House on Delaware Avenue and L Street, Southwest. Their next movement was the organization of a church, September 12, 1864, with nine members. They bought what was then known as Simpson's Feed Store on the present site of the church, and remodeled this building in 1867; William J. Walker was its founder and first pastor. In January, 1869, William Gibbons of Charlottesville, Virginia, became the pastor and under his temporal and spiritual oversight the church flourished. The first church edifice was dedicated in 1871 and for twenty-one years was used by the congregation. In 1891 the present structure was built at an expenditure of \$35,000. The membership at the forty-eighth anniversary was 2,310, the largest at the time in the District of Columbia. Up to the close of the nineteenth century they raised annually on an average of \$8,000 for current expenses. Their present pastor, William J. Howard, has a unique record as being one of the best known ministers and men in the city, regardless of denomination, and with a character beyond reproach.³⁵

The Metropolitan, formerly known as the Fourth Baptist Church, was organized May 1863 by a few holding letters from the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church during the pastorate of Duke W. Anderson, and by a few members from other churches. Henry Bailey was the first pastor

³⁴ This is a condensed account furnished Dr. J. M. Waldron.

³⁵ These facts were obtained from the church records.

of the new group. In 1865 there took place a division of this body which resulted in the establishment of the Fifth, now the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church. The organization was effected in a mission building which stood in the intersection of what is now R Street and Vermont Avenue. Two contending parties, both claiming to be the Fourth Baptist Church, were then engaged in presenting their rival claims. Four church councils were held before it was established which one had the right to bear the title Fourth. Robert Johnson took charge in 1870, seven years after the original movement. Under him the establishment prospered.

Four buildings have been used as church edifices in the history of this congregation, the mission building referred to above, the barracks, a relic of the Civil War, and a frame structure on the site of the present edifice, which at that time of its dedication in 1884 was valued at \$60,000; but to-day the valuation, conservatively speaking, may be placed at \$175,000. From 1865 to 1890 the membership was about 2,000, 1,100 of whom were baptized by Robert Johnson. The first Washington Baptist Convention composed of churches principally of the District of Columbia requested in September, 1890, that the church be called the Metropolitan. The congregation formally agreed to bear the title and since then Metropolitan has been its legal as well as its popular name.

After securing the services of Dr. M. W. D. Norman, who came from Portsmouth, Virginia, in 1905, the progress of the church has been such as to merit fully the title Metropolitan. On his assumption of the pastorate, a large floating and bonded indebtedness rested on the church. This has been discharged and modern improvements of electricity and steam heating at the cost of \$15,000 have been provided. Yet there is not a dollar of indebtedness and the membership has increased to 5,748.

The following ministers have been ordained by the Metropolitan Baptist Church: Charles H. Parker, W.

Bishop Johnson, John A. Pryer, Edward B. Gordon, Anderson Hogan, Luke D. Best, William Richardson, William Johnson, E. R. Jackson, John Braxton, John Mercer, Noah Grimes, Levi Washington, and W. L. Hill.³⁶

The Baptist church on Vermont Avenue between Q and R Streets was originally established as the Fifth Baptist Church, June 5, 1866, by the pious J. H. Brooks, with seven members. He built a frame structure which was afterward replaced by a more comfortable brick building. Under him the congregation grew and in 1884, when he died the church had a membership of 1,800. He had served his people well, impressed the community with his worth, and passed to his reward loved not only by his own members but by the Christian people throughout the city.

He was succeeded by Dr. George W. Lee, who came to this church from North Carolina where he had served successfully as a pastor. Dr. Lee was installed in 1885 and served a quarter of a century, passing away on February 6, 1910. There were several important achievements during his pastorate. In 1890, at a cost of about \$25,000, he remodeled the building left by J. H. Brooks and changed the name to Vermont Avenue Baptist Church. Being a great preacher and pastor noted for his originality and his ability to master the situation, he soon attracted a large following and increased the membership of his church almost to 4,000. He easily became a man of national reputation and in his travels abroad so impressed the people wherever he went that he developed into an international character.

Dr. Lee was noted especially for three significant elements in his character. Near to his heart was the promotion of African missions in keeping with his deep sense of charity. He was always a friend of the poor and, being such, emphasized more than any other duty of the church that of supporting missionary work in Africa. As a result the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church did more for this purpose than many other churches of the District of Co-

³⁶ A statement verified by the present pastor.

lumbia combined. He was always disposed, moreover, to help the under man in the struggle with his uncharitable accusers and traducers. When a minister was under fire, he usually stood by the unfortunate, if there was any possible chance to save him for the good of the service. He made himself, too, a patron of young men aspiring to the ministry, raising money for their support by impressing upon the people the importance of educating them. In this connection he trained and helped to support Dr. James E. Willis, who was baptized, licensed and ordained to preach under Dr. Lee. Through contact the one became attached to the other so that the younger imbibed the spirit of the other.

Dr. Willis became his successor in 1911. At first many of the members questioned his ability to fill such a position so that there developed much trouble in the congregation and much anxiety among the people at large. There followed a schism which resulted in litigation in the courts and the secession of a group of members who established the Florida Avenue Baptist Church, now in the charge of Dr. Taylor. Dr. Willis, however, was established as pastor with the support of a large majority of the members of the church. He filled the position with such distinction and attracted to him such a following of willing workers that the church prospered under him as it did under his predecessor. In recognition of his valuable services the congregation gave him a trip to the Holy Land at a cost of \$3,000. It then purchased adjoining property upon which it erected a monument to Dr. George W. Lee.

According to a recent report rendered by the clerk and treasurer, the congregation has during the pastorate of Dr. Willis raised more than \$68,000 for general expenses and \$1,850 for their Old Folk's Home. This does not by any means account for the amount raised for charitable purposes, which include home and foreign missions. The support given needy members and institutions of learning, traveling ministers, and the like, has amounted approximately to \$35,000 or \$40,000. The church, moreover, has

been very generous in the support of home missions, a duty decidedly emphasized by Dr. Willis in contradistinction to the inclination of Dr. Lee, who emphasized foreign missions.^{36a}

Baptists in another part of the city were planning an additional organization. The First Baptist Church of South Washington was organized on Sixth Street between G and H Streets, Southwest, in 1866. Alfred Bolden was the first pastor. Two buildings have been erected on the present site. One Mr. Lee afterward served as the pastor until the coming of Henry C. Robinson, who exhibited energy that promised a bright future. Early in the history of the church, as an outcome of an internal agitation, however, 54 excluded members organized the Virginia Avenue Baptist Church and were afterward joined by others, thus weakening the parent organization; but in 1891 the property was valued at \$25,000 and the church had a membership of 500.³⁷

Another Baptist church soon resulted from a secession. In 1873 William Shanklin, Peter Gray, Abraham Blackmore, Edward Montague, and Catherine Wilson left the Fifth Baptist Church, now the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church, and formed, with their friends, Mt. Jezreel. Since then it has grown to be the largest Negro Baptist church in Southeast Washington, though it is also the youngest. The church, when first formed, was located on Van Street. It grew rapidly, and soon was able to buy desirable property on the southeast corner of Fifth and E Streets and begin the erection of its present handsome church edifice. In 1888 the building was finished and it was dedicated the first Sunday in November of that year, when Dr. Robert Johnson, of the Metropolitan Baptist Church, preached the dedicatory sermon. Its membership numbers about 300 people, and the church is in a very prosperous condition.³⁸

The organization of another Baptist church soon fol-

^{36a} A statement made by the clerk of the church.

³⁷ A statement made by a number of old members of the church.

³⁸ The records of the church.

lowed. In September, 1876, there was organized on Nichol's Avenue, Hillsdale, the Bethlehem Baptist Church by Henry Scott, its first pastor. It was an outgrowth from the Macedonia Baptist Church organized nine years before by Sandy Alexander, of the First West Washington Church. The first officers were William Singleton, Carle Matthews, James Flood, Richard Harrison, Mack McKenzie, Cornelius W. Davis, David Simpson, Armstead Taylor, and Leonard Peyton.³⁹ The second minister, William H. Phillips, served with considerable success for six years when he was called to the Shiloh Baptist Church in Philadelphia, where he died.⁴⁰

A new church was soon to evolve as a result of another stir among the Baptists. The succession of the pastorates of Dr. Anthony Binga, Sr., and Jesse Bolden to that of Dr. D. W. Anderson did not satisfy an important element of the 19th Street Baptist Church, which for fifteen years had given that church moral and financial support. Steps to organize a new church were therefore taken. In the preliminary stages of the separation there was much opposition. Nevertheless, they organized May 7, 1877, at the residence of William H. A. Wormley, 1126 16th Street, Northwest, and were recognized by a council of Baptist churches which met at the residence of L. C. Bailey, 1022 Nineteenth Street, June 5, 1877.⁴¹ With twenty-two members this determined body went pluckily to work. In the first place, they were fortunate in securing for their pastor a man who for thirteen years voluntarily served the flock

³⁹ Their first meeting house was erected with a seating capacity of 300 at a cost of \$800; the second, which would seat 500, cost \$2,000. With their more than 150 membership they raised \$1,000 annually and expended \$850 on current expenses.

⁴⁰ These are facts given by the officers of this church.

⁴¹ J. W. Parker, pastor of the E Street Baptist Church, was moderator, and Lalmon Richards, of the North Baptist Church, was clerk of this council. The organization consisted of twenty-two members, 10 men and 12 women: James Storum, Wormley, White, Harrod, Denney, Bailey, John Pierre Randolph, Rowe, Page, Mrs. Wormley, Mrs. Anderson, widow of D. W. Anderson, Eliza Jackson, Mary Jackson, Thompson, Pierre, Denney, White, Farley, Bailey and Watson.

without salary. For twenty-five years, 1877 to 1902, they worshipped in their church on 18th Street, which was erected within six months of organization for the sum of \$19,000. The church grew from 22 to 200. It is a fair estimate that \$50,000 was received from all sources during this period. In 1902 they sold this church to the John Wesley A. M. E. Zion for \$19,500 cash. After vacating their building and meeting in Odd Fellows Hall they erected their present building at 11th and V Streets, which they have paid for in full. The successor to Mr. Wm. Waring was Dr. W. A. Creditt.⁴² Then came Dr. J. M. Waldron, who in 1892 was succeeded by Rev. Mr. D. F. Rivers, who still abides as a potent factor in the life of the Washington people.

After the Civil War Negroes became attracted to denominations in which they had never sought membership because of their close attachment to the Methodists and Baptists. From just such a divergence from the old order resulted the organization of the Lincoln Memorial Temple Congregational Church, on the northeast corner of 11th and R Streets, Northwest. This church was organized in the parlor of F. S. Presbrey, publisher of *Public Opinion*, January 10, 1887, with Rev. S. P. Smith as its first pastor. Lincoln Temple is the outgrowth of the Colfax Industrial Mission founded by members of the First Congregational Church, prominent among whom was John W. Alvord. It later became the Lincoln Mission. In addition to the Sunday School feature should be mentioned the industrial work, as classes in domestic science and domestic art were conducted there. For a time this mission constituted the first church home for Negro girls in the country. Among its founders were R. S. Smith, William H. Jackson, Theodore Clark and wife, Otwinia Smith, Miss Booker, Hiram Ball, a Mrs. Jackson of Chicago and a Mr. Shorter. The Lincoln Mission Sunday School, with an attendance running at times to 700 and more, was a part of the work of the charitable organizations of the North engaged in missions and education in the

⁴² This is an abridged statement verified by the church itself.

South among the freedmen. As such it was one of the institutions of the city in Sabbath School work, with music especially popular. This school enjoyed the fostering care of the American Missionary Association, which appointed a minister to conduct religious services and a woman to work in the homes of the people. The teachers of the Sunday School were of both races. The whites were drawn from the First Congregational Church and Negroes were mainly students from Howard University.

During the operation of these two instrumentalities, the thought that the work of the school could be made more effectual and permanent by the organization of a church first took tangible form in the years of Mr. Smith's ministrations, and the church grew steadily and surely. Rev. George W. Moore became pastor on June 1, 1883. His work was a thorough success, due in no small measure to the personality of his wife, Ella Sheppard Moore, who had been pianist of the Fisk Jubilee Singers and with them had circled the globe. Dr. Moore resigned in 1893. Subsequent pastors have been Rev. Eugene Johnson, A. P. Miller and Sterling N. Brown. Dr. Brown was followed by Rev. Emory B. Smith, an enterprising young man who has brought the church to the very foremost in all the activities of religious work.⁴³

The Plymouth Congregational Church was the direct outcome of dissatisfaction of many members of Union Bethel, now the Metropolitan Church, at the arbitrary action of Bishop Daniel A. Payne in the matter of the appointment of the Rev. John W. Stevenson as pastor of Union Bethel Church and the refusal to remove him. For these reasons 63 members decided to withdraw from the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and organized themselves in the Shiloh Hall on L Street, near 16th, Northwest, as the First Congregational Church of Washington in the District of Columbia. William T. Peele, who for several years had been a local preacher and class leader at Union

⁴³ This is based on a statement made by this church.

Bethel Church was one of the number—in fact, the leader of the recalcitrant communicants. Church services for the new congregation were held in the meeting place of the Salem Baptist Church on N Street near 17th. Here they could meet only in the afternoon on Sunday. Other quarters were then secured on 18th Street near L and M Streets. On October 5, 1881, the name of the new organization was changed to that of the Plymouth Congregational Church of Washington. Their leader, William T. Peele, was then regularly ordained and installed as their pastor by Dr. Holmes of Baltimore, assisted by Dr. J. E. Rankin, then pastor of First Congregational Church, Dr. William Patton, President of Howard University, W. W. Hicks, and S. P. Smith. The church attached itself to the New Jersey Association of Congregational Churches at the fourteenth annual meeting held in the First Congregational Church in April, 1882. The church then purchased at a cost of \$4,500 a site at the southeast corner of 17th and P Streets, on which it built by 1887.

William T. Peele, to whom this body rallied as its first pastor tendered his resignation July 26, 1888, and for several months the church was without a pastor. Dr. Sterling N. Brown of Cleveland, Ohio, entered upon the pastorate April 1, 1887, and rendered a most successful service. Under his guidance they evolved steadily from Methodism to Congregationalism.

Dr. Alexander C. Garner became the next pastor in 1896 and for twenty-five years led the church both temporally and spiritually. The church has been honored by his being chosen to represent the Congregationalists at national gatherings. The entire church mortgage debt was cancelled during Dr. Garner's incumbency, when all the churches were making strenuous and successful efforts to the same end. In fact, his successful career had much to do with his call to the direction of the growing spiritual interests of the Congregationalists in Harlem in New York.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ This account is based on the records of this church.

Some Negroes, too, had begun to look with more favor upon the Protestant Episcopal church. As early as 1866 cottage meetings were held by C. H. Hall, rector of the Epiphany, with the assistance of J. Vaughn Lewis, rector of St. John's Church. This movement went to the extent that steps were taken looking to the establishment of a church and the purchase of a lot on which an edifice was to be built. At this juncture Mrs. Parsons, a communicant of St. John's parish, donated a lot for the purpose on 23d Street, and Secretary of War E. M. Stanton contributed a frame building in 1867. From 1867 to 1873 several white clergymen officiated, but the selection of a colored minister to take charge of the work was indispensable. Efforts to this end soon followed. Among the clergymen considered were William H. Josephus, a talented West Indian, and William J. Alston, who had been rector of St. Phillip's in New York and of St. Thomas in Philadelphia. John Thomas Johnson, a progressive Negro citizen who in the reconstruction times was Treasurer of the District Government, began on behalf of a number of interested people a correspondence with Dr. Alexander Crummell with a view to securing him as the spiritual leader of these Episcopalians. This effort resulted in bringing Dr. Crummell to Washington in June, 1873.

The people almost instantaneously rallied to Dr. Crummell's support and the outcome was the determination to build a church. A sinking fund association, composed of young people from different sections of the city, and in which other denominations were represented, was a most active factor. The enthusiasm was intense. The corner stone was laid in 1876 at Fifteenth and Sampson Streets, near Church Street, and work on the new building went rapidly on. Dr. Crummell meanwhile traveled extensively throughout the North and East for funds in aid of the new movement. Such was his success that the first services in the new building were held there on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1879.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ These facts were obtained from the records of the church.

With the opening of St. Luke's a new opportunity presented itself at St. Mary's, where the congregation under the administration of Mr. O. L. Mitchell developed into an institutional church. It was consecrated December 11, 1894, by Bishop William Paret, then of Maryland, assisted by Bishop Penick and Dr. W. V. Tunnell, of Howard University, who preached the sermon. St. Mary's is one of the most beautiful of churches.

The rise of Negro Catholic churches in the District of Columbia as well as throughout the United States has been less extensive for the reason that not very many Negroes have been attracted to this denomination because of its ritualistic appeal, and those who have become adherents to the Catholic faith have been treated with so much more of the spirit of Christ than they have been by other sects, that the tendency toward independent church establishments has not been so pronounced. Early in the history of the District of Columbia Rev. Leonard Neale, the Archbishop of Georgetown, his brother, the Rev. Francis Neale of the Holy Trinity Church, and Father Van Lomell, pastor of the same church in 1807, were all friends of the Negroes, showing no distinction on account of color in the establishment of parish schools and the uplift of the people. The same policy was followed by Father De Theux, who in 1817 succeeded Father Macelroy, who established a Sunday School and labored with a great deal of devotion to bring them into the church. The Catholic Church was free in all of its privileges to all persons regardless of color. This was especially true of St. Patrick's Church under its founder, Father Matthew, who permitted the poorest Negro to kneel at the altar side by side with the highest personages in the land. The same was observed in St. Aloysius Church and in St. Mary's Church at Alexandria. The Catholics were the last to change their attitude toward the Negro during the critical antislavery period of the thirties, forties, and fifties, when the Protestant churches practically excluded the Negroes from their Sunday Schools and congregations.

This explains why the Negro Catholics organized in the District of Columbia during the early period only one Catholic church of their own, St. Martin's, although the Negro Catholics constituted a considerable part of the Negro population.

The actual separation of the Negroes in the Catholic Church did not take place until the Civil War itself necessitated certain changes to meet the special needs of the Negroes in their new status. The establishment of St. Augustine's Church, however, somewhat antedated this. Before the organization of this church there was established a school meeting the special needs of the Negroes on L Street, and out of that developed the organization of this church in 1863. The moving spirit in this undertaking was Father Charles J. White, who was then pastor of St. Matthew's church in which the Negroes had always felt free to worship. Early in 1863 he purchased a lot on 15th Street between L and M and built there a two-story structure with the assistance of colored members from the various churches of the city and especially from those of St. Matthew's. Among those participating in the launching of this new church were the following: Miss Mary Harrison, Mr. Isaac Landic and wife, Mrs. Jane Smallwood, Mrs. Henry Warren and family, Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Smith, the Misses Mary and Sara Ann Smith, Mr. William T. Benjamin, Mr. Bazil Mullen, Mr. John West, Miss Agnes Gray, Messrs. William H. Wheeler, Henry Jackson, Henry Neal and family, James F. Jackson and family, Mrs. Frances Madison, and the Misses Eliza Ann Cook, Mary T. Smith, Eliza Hall, and Jane Teagle.

In the course of time there were so many accessions to the church that more space was needed. In 1865, therefore, a frame building was added at the time that the church was under the patronage of Martin de Porrers, a colored lay brother of the order of St. Dominic, who had labored in South America. Dr. White was still the pastor, with Martin de Porrers officiating at most of the services. In the course

of time it was necessary to seek other assistants, who were supplied by the Society of Jesus at Georgetown College in the person of Fathers Kelly and Cleary.

After the Civil War Archbishop Spaulding, then in charge of the diocese, saw the opportunity and the challenge of the church to meet the many needs of the freedmen who without spiritual guidance might morally retrograde. He therefore called for other workers to offer their lives as a sacrifice to a noble cause. In Italy at this time there was Father Barroti, who after having equipped himself for missionary work prepared to carry the Gospel message to the Chinese. In 1869, however, he was persuaded to go to the more inviting field of the freedmen in the United States. After some further instruction in English and other matters essential to the equipment for service among these people, he took charge of this Negro congregation in 1867. He immediately succeeded in securing the cooperation of the Negroes and the respect of the community. He passed among them as a man of Christian virtue and an apostle to the lowly. His following so rapidly increased that it was soon necessary to add wooden buildings to the original structure and to purchase additional property for a new building in 1869. To finance these undertakings he had the cooperation of Father Walters in St. Patrick's.

The new structure, planned to cost about \$100,000, was begun in 1874 and completed and dedicated in the midst of impressive ceremonies in 1876. At first it was thought best to place this church under the patronage of the Blessed Martin de Porrers. According to the regulation of the church law, however, whereas a chapel could be designated in honor of an ecclesiastic, a parish church could not be thus dedicated, but must be named for one of the Saints. It was then decided to name it for St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in Africa. Upon the completion of this structure the Negro Catholic congregation was given a new standing in the community and in the United States.

In 1881 the death of Father Barroti marked an epoch

in the history of this church. For some time there was serious doubt as to how the congregation could secure the services of some one so well equipped as this sacrificing churchman. Fortunately, however, the zealous Fathers of St. Joseph, an order established in England for the special benefit of the Negroes, came to take up the task. Thoroughly devoted to their work and believing in the uplift of the Negroes to a plane of equality with the whites, these Fathers caused the white Catholics much trouble by imposing upon those visiting St. Augustine's the same restrictions that some of the Catholic churches after the Civil War began to impose upon Negroes worshipping elsewhere. Chief among these may be mentioned Fathers Michael J. Walsh as rector, with Father Girard Wiersma and Father Francis P. Kerrick as associate pastors. Later he had such assistants as Father Burke and Father Hohlman. The successor of Father Walsh was the Rev. Paul Griffith, with Father G. A. Dougherty as assistant and later an additional assistant in the person of the Rev. Father H. Bischoff. Father Olds succeeded Father Griffith, having as his assistant Father O'Connor and Father Mihm. As the church had the cooperation of Archbishop Spaulding in his day, it was similarly assisted by Archbishop Baily and especially so by Archbishop Gibbons, later Cardinal. Among the teachers who made possible the increasing membership by their valuable work in the parochial school of the church should be mentioned Miss Mary Smith, later Mrs. W. F. Benjamin, Mr. Ambrose Queen, and Miss Eliza Ann Cook.⁴⁶

Negro Catholics living in East Washington and worshippers at St. Peter's and St. Joseph's churches, desirous of having a church of their own, were responsive to the labors of Father James R. Matthews, assistant pastor of St. Peter's. He was a native of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, had studied at St. Charles College and St. Mary's Seminary in the diocese of Maryland, and was ordained a priest in

⁴⁶ These facts as to Negro Catholics were taken from records in the form of a church monthly newspaper in the possession of Dr. John F. Smith.

1886. He worked so assiduously and energetically for the new congregation here at Washington, which was then known as St. Benedict's, that a site for their building was purchased on the corner of 13th and C Streets, Southeast, about the middle of April, 1893. The work of excavation was begun on the last day of July and the corner stone was laid on the 24th of September of that year. Less than eight months afterward the church was complete and ready for public worship. An imposing parade, participated in by uniformed white and Negro Catholic societies of Baltimore and Washington, was a feature of the occasion. Cardinal Gibbons dedicated the Church as St. Cyprian.⁴⁷

JOHN W. CROMWELL

⁴⁷ The sermon was delivered by Dr. O'Gorman. The edifice is an imposing structure of Potomac blue stone, granite basement with trimmings of Baltimore County marble. A slate roof crowns the building, the elevation to the apex of the roof being 56 feet. The facade is broken at the corner with a square tower standing with its top about 113 feet from the ground. Three wide doors open from the street approached by ten stone steps so constructed as to make them easy to ascend or descend. The church will seat 600 persons and cost about \$40,000. In connection with its religious activities St. Cyprian's has a parochial school and academy located on 8th and D Streets, five blocks west. This is the gift of one Miss Atkins, one of the most thrifty of Negro women of the community, who had been a student at St. Francis Academy in Baltimore.